

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on December 12, 2007. Claims 1-8, 10 and 20-28 were pending in that action. All claims were rejected. With the present response, all claims are unchanged. Consideration and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested in light of the following comments.

Beginning on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-3, 6-8, 10 and 20-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Publication No. 2005/0027691 (hereinafter referred to as “the Brin reference”) in view of US Publication No. 2003/0097252 (hereinafter referred to as “the Mackie reference”). Beginning on page 10 of the Office Action, claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Brin and Mackie references, and further in view of US Publication No. 2003/0088547 (herein after referred to as “the Hammond reference”).

Applicant appreciates that the cited Brin reference is similar to Applicant’s invention in that it pertains to methods for making terms available to a searching process. However, it is respectfully pointed out that the cited Mackie reference has nothing to do with providing additional terms to a searching process. The Mackie reference pertains to methods for segmenting compound words in a natural-language input into its individual component words. The connection between the Brin and Mackie references is tenuous at best. The Office Action makes little or no effort to explain why one skilled in the art would combine the Brin and Mackie references. In fact, it is respectfully submitted that the only reasonable motivation for doing so would be to reconstruct, in hindsight, the invention of the Applicant in the present case. Applicant respectfully requests an explanation as to why one would look to a reference that describes segmenting compound words for inspiration in conceiving of a completely unrelated scheme for concatenating words.

The Mackie reference does not even really teach concatenating natural language input. The Mackie reference completely teaches away from concatenation by describing many methods for segmenting compound words. The Examiner tries to get by this by pointing to the background of the Mackie reference. The background of the Mackie reference simply says that

sometimes natural language input includes concatenated words. There is absolutely no teaching or suggestion of any scheme for accomplishing concatenation. At best, the background describes concatenating by squeezing consecutive words together.

When one combines the Brin and Mackie references, one is left with a system wherein search terms come in a compound form. The compound form of the words is then segmented into its individual word components. Even if the citation of the Mackie background is given the benefit of the doubt, at most, one is left with a system wherein consecutive words are concatenated into a single string before being submitted to a search process.

It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are very much distinguishable from the references cited by the Examiner. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully solicited. The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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